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DOL FOR BLS AND ILAB  
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SUBJECT: EU UNEMPLOYMENT AT 7.0 PERCENT; EURO ZONE UNEMPLOYMENT AT 7.3 PERCENT

¶1. SUMMARY. The aggregate unemployment rate for the EU-27 reached 7.0 percent in September 2007, according to data published by the EU Commission's Statistical Office (EUROSTAT) on October 31. Unemployment in the euro zone (the thirteen EU countries participating in the euro) stood at 7.3 percent. END SUMMARY.

¶2. With seasonal adjustment and compensation for differences in national statistical methods, the unemployment rate in the EU-27 stood at 7.0 percent in September 2007, down from 7.1 percent in August 2007 (revised upward from 6.7 percent initial estimate reported last month) and from 8.0 percent in September 2006. The unemployment rate for the euro zone stood at 7.3 percent in September 2007, down from 7.4 percent in August 2007 (also revised upward from 6.9 percent initial estimate) and from 8.1, percent in September 2006.

¶3. EUROSTAT said the significant upward revision of its August 2007 rates for both the EU and euro areas was due mainly to a revision of German unemployment data, now based on the continuous Labor Force Survey to calculate monthly harmonized unemployment. Due to the size of the German economy, the revision had a marked impact on EUROSTAT data. Moreover, as a regular update of the calculation process, most recent data from the latest EU Labor Force Survey have been included for several Member States, which had the effect of causing a revision in the rates for Ireland and the Netherlands, in particular.

¶4. The lowest rates compiled by EUROSTAT from the EU-27 for September 2007 were recorded in the Netherlands (3.1 percent) and in Denmark (3.3 percent, August 2007 figures). The highest rates were recorded in Slovakia (11.1 percent) and Poland (8.8 percent).

¶5. EUROSTAT noted that twenty-three countries among the EU-27 recorded a decrease in their unemployment rate over a year and three an increase, while the unemployment rate was stable in Luxembourg. The most significant decreases (September-to-September comparison) occurred in Poland (from 12.9 percent to 8.8 percent) and Lithuania (from 6.0 percent to 4.1 percent). The highest relative increases were recorded in Ireland (from 4.1 percent to 4.8 percent) and Portugal (from 7.6 percent to 8.3 percent).

¶6. Based on EUROSTAT estimates, male unemployment reached 6.5 percent in September 2007 for the EU-27 and 6.6 percent for the euro zone, down by 0.9 percentage point and 0.6 percentage point

respectively when compared to September 2006. The female rate over the same period decreased to 7.7 percent for the EU-27 (minus 1.0 percentage point) and to 8.3 percent for the euro zone (minus 0.9 percentage point).

¶7. Unemployment rates among young people under 25 (September 2007 estimates, unless otherwise noted) ranged from 5.6 percent in the Netherlands, 6.5 percent in Denmark (August 2007), and 8.0 percent in Austria to 22.9 percent in Greece (second quarter of 2007), 21.6 percent in France, 19.6 percent in Romania and 19.2 percent in Poland. The rate for this age group in September 2007 was estimated at 15.1 percent for the EU-27 and 14.9 percent for the euro zone, compared to 16.9 percent (minus 1.8 percentage point) and 15.9 percent (minus 0.8 percentage point) respectively in September 2006.

¶8. EUROSTAT estimated that 16.7 million were unemployed in the EU-27 in September 2007 (11.2 million in the euro zone). Following is the breakdown of unemployment rates in ascending order for the individual EU member states:

(Seasonally-adjusted)  
(September 2007 unless otherwise indicated)

Netherlands	3.1
Denmark	3.3 (August 2007)
Cyprus	3.7
Lithuania	4.1
Austria	4.2
Slovenia	4.7
Ireland	4.8
Luxembourg	4.8
Czech Republic	5.2
Latvia	5.2
UK	5.3 (July 2007)
Estonia	5.7

BRUSSELS 00003270 002 OF 002

Sweden	5.8 (provisional)
Italy	5.9 (second quarter 2007)
Bulgaria	6.3
Malta	6.3
Finland	6.9
Romania	7.2
Hungary	7.3
Belgium	7.5
Spain	8.0
Germany	8.1
Portugal	8.3
Greece	8.4 (second quarter 2007)
France	8.6 (see note below)
Poland	8.8
Slovakia	11.1
Euro zone	7.3
EU-27	7.0

Note: Estimates for France are based on results of the Labor Force Survey that are provisional and will be subject to revision later this year.

¶9. The monthly rates and numbers of unemployed are estimated and based on data from the EU labor force survey. The estimated rates may differ from national unemployment rates due to differences in methods and definitions of unemployment. Unemployed people according to ILO criteria are those aged 15 and over who:

-- Are without work;

-- Are available to start work within the next two weeks; and

-- Have actively sought employment at some time during the previous four weeks.

